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Benghazi 664

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FM AMEMBASSY BENGHAZI
TO AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 217
AMEMBASSY BAIDA

C O N F I D E N T I A L BENGHAZI 664

SUBJECT: SITREP BENGHAZI, 18:00 SEPTEMBER 4

1. DEMONSTRATIONS IN BENGHAZI DURING PERIOD WHEN CURFEW WAS LIFTED (12:00-17:00) WERE BETTER ORGANIZED THAN YESTERDAY'S. ALTHOUGH STREETS WERE CLOGGED, TRAFFIC FLOWED MORE FREELY DUE IN PART TO THE PRESENCE OF MORE EXPERIENCED WHITE UNIFORMED TRAFFIC POLICE. MORE FOOD STORES AND PHARMACIES WERE OPEN AND ADEQUATE SUPPLIES OF BREAD AND OTHER STAPLES STILL AVAILABLE. SOME DELIVERIES OF BEVERAGES TO HOTELS AND RESTRAUNTS WERE MADE, BUT INVENTORIES OF MOST SHOPS ARE RAPIDLY DWINDLING. PRICES HAVE REMAINED STEADY AS ORDERED BY THE RCC. ELECTRICITY AND WATER ARE STILL AVAILABLE AND SOME EFFORT IS BEING MADE TO CLEAN STREETS, BUT TELEPHONES AND TELEGRAPH STILL OUT. MANY OF VEHICLES DAMAGED SINCE BEGINNING OF REVOLUTION HAVE BEEN ROMOVED FROM STREETS.

2. BESIDES TRUCKLOADS OF YOUNG DEMONSTRATORS STREETS WERE FULL OF CARS LOADED WITH JOYRIDING YOUTHS AND SEVERAL UNVEILED FEMALES WERE OBSERVED. OLDER PEOPLE STOOD OR WALKED ON THE SIDEWALKS, AND MADE PURCHASES AND WENT ABOUT THEIR BUSINESS IN AN ORDERLY, QUIET WAY. WOMEN AND CHILDREN WERE SEEN WATCHING THE DOMONSTRATION FROM EVERY AVAILABLE BALCONY WITH LITTLE DISPLAY OF EMOTION. THROUGHOUT THE DAY, STREETS HAVE BEEN PATROLLED BY JOINT ARMY/CYDEF PATROL, AS THEY HAVE BEEN SINCE REVOLUTION STARTED. THERE HAVE BEEN NO REPEAT NO

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SIGNS OF ANTI-AMERICANISM. AMERICAN CENTER IS UNGUARDED AND UNTOUCHED. ARMORED CAR IS PARKED NEAR EMBASSY.

3. BENGHAZI TV WAS ON THE AIR LAST NIGHT BROADCASTING PICTURES OF PARADES CELEBRATING REVOLUTION AND STATEMENT OF SUPPORT. BRITISH EMBOFF HASKELLS INFOMS ME A NUMBER OF CYRENICANS, INCLUDING CYDEF STRIKE FORCE COMMANDER SENUSSI FEZZANI ALSO APPEARED PERSONALLY ON TV TO MAKE STATEMENTS OF SUPPORT.

4. VISIT OF UAR AND SUDANESE REPS APPARENTLY CAUGHT RCC BY SURPRISE. SECURITY AROUND RADIO/TV HEADQUARTERS WAS VERY TIGHT WHILE MEETING IN PROGRESS, BUT HAS NOW BEEN RELAXED. ARRIVAL OF ADDIONAL TROOPS AND ARMOR LAST NIGHT HAS APPARENTLY GIVEN RCC MORE SELF CONFIDENCE. FEELING OF TENSION OF PAST FEW DAYS IS BEGINNING TOEASE BUT AMERICANS (AND OTHERS) WHO HAVE BEEN COUPED UP IN HOTELS AND APARTMENTS FOR LAST FOUR DAYS ARE STILL UNEASY AND VERY RESTLESS. IN GENERAL IT APPEARS THAT RCC HAS STRENGTHENED ITS CONTROL IN BENGHAZI. BLAKE

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NARA Date 2010